

MEDIA STATEMENT

For Immediate Release: Friday, November 22, 2024

OSSTF/FEESO celebrates federal funding to help feed children in need across Ontario

TORONTO, ON – OSSTF/FEESO praises today’s announcement that Ontario will receive more than \$108 million from the federal government over the next three years to offer much needed expansion to the province’s existing school food programs. It is estimated that this money will help feed an extra 160,000 kids per day once implemented.

“Today’s announcement is a momentous development that the education community has fought for over many years. We see firsthand how detrimental food insecurity is, as thousands of children come to school hungry every single day in Ontario. Hunger impacts students’ physical and mental health and makes it nearly impossible for them focus on their essential learning and development. Now, we look to the Ford government to ensure this funding is implemented effectively and equitably across the province to help children who are most in need.”

The federal government announced funding for a National School Food Program last April after many years of advocacy from the Canadian Teachers’ Federation and its members, including OSSTF/FEESO. Since then, OSSTF/FEESO has lobbied the Ford government to accept the federal money and implement a province-wide school food program and ensure no child is left behind.

In July, OSSTF/FEESO President Karen Littlewood wrote to Premier Ford, asking him to fully collaborate with the federal government to provide children in Ontario with accessible, nutritious, sustainable, and stigma-free school meals through the National School Food Program.

“We knew how important it was to write directly to Premier Ford and urge him to work with the federal government to have an agreement in place as soon as possible. Now, OSSTF/FEESO and our 60,000 education worker and teacher members will work with both levels of government and other stakeholders to make this program an immediate success for everyone involved, especially the students of Ontario whose lives will be greatly improved through this program.”

OSSTF/FEESO, founded in 1919, has over 60,000 members across Ontario. They include public high school teachers, occasional teachers, educational assistants, continuing education teachers and instructors, early childhood educators, psychologists, secretaries, speech-language pathologists, social workers, plant support personnel, university support staff, and many others in education.

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